



The Compassionate Friends

Greater New Orleans Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2016

Chapter Leader: Denise St. Pierre 504-265-0581 Email address: tcfnola@gmail.com www.tcfneworleans.com



18th Annual Butterfly Release and Picnic
Sunday April 10, 2016 11:30 AM



The Compassionate Friends Children's

Bereaved families, relatives and friends who have experienced the death of a child are invited to attend The Compassionate Friends 17th Annual Butterfly Release and Picnic in remembrance of all beloved children who have died.

The picnic begins at 11:30 AM at The Compassionate Friends Children's Memorial Garden. The picnic is a time to gather together to socialize, to play, to be family. Families are asked to bring their own food and tables as well as chairs or blankets on which to sit.

You may come for just the butterfly release at 1:00 PM. There will be a short program of readings, poems and music. Enjoying refreshments and visiting with TCF friends and family after the butterflies are released is a special part of the day. If you would like to donate any—cookies, cakes, brownies, desserts—any of your special favorites—please contact Jan Dutilh at 504-650-1117!

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"That's what Compassionate Friends do—they help to bring our children into our lives even though our children are no longer alive. For a few hours each month, our children return to us." —Annette Mennen Baldwin  
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"We wish you the close connection between the butterfly and the soul, so close that when you see the butterflies this summer, and each year, your spirits may be lifted as you remember this time of transformation in your lives. We wish you the grace of flight and transformation." —Mary Austin, Bereavement Magazine



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*The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.*  
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BIRTHDAY TABLE: We remembered birthdays in **FEBRUARY** for: **Dennis Duhon; Eric Hansen.** We do encourage both you & your family to come when it is your child's birthday month, to share your child with all of us. You will receive a special birthday gift in memory of your child. Bring that treasured picture of your child that always makes you smile so we may smile with you.

The birthday cake for **February** is in memory of **Dennis Duhon.**

MONTHLY MEETINGS

March 14, 2016

2nd Monday of every month

East Jefferson Hospital
4200 Houma Blvd.
Metairie, LA 70006

Time: **7:00 PM – 9:00 PM**

On the 1st floor, adjacent to the Hudson St. Garage, Esplanade II room

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

April 11 August 8
May 9 September 12
June 13 October 10
July 11 November 14
 December 12

REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Denise St. Pierre
504-454-5078
denisestp12@gmail.com

NATIONAL OFFICE

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877-969-0010

"NEW" NEWS

TCF ANGELS: *Loving angels are everywhere – In the smiles that you give; In the words that you say; In gentle hearts of those who care.* We need "special angels" who care and can help with the work of our chapter. In helping others – you are healed. Become a "volunteer."

VOLUNTEER LIST

TCF NEEDS YOU!!

Call Denise St. Pierre 504-265-0581 to help!

1. **Birthday Table** – We need someone to call those members whose child is having a birthday that month and ask them to come to TCF and bring a picture or other memento of their child to put on the birthday table.
2. **Welcome** – Can you call our new members during the month and check how they are? We need 2 volunteers.
3. **Greeters** – Can you welcome the new members who come to a TCF meeting?
4. **Kleenex** – Bring boxes of tissues to each meeting.

Dear Members, Please call me if you have any questions about the above list. Perhaps you would like to volunteer but are afraid to try. That is OK. You can always try for just a few months and stop if it does not work out. NOTE: All members can volunteer – those who come to TCF meetings and those who do not. ALSO: these jobs can be done at your home and at your own convenience! Much love and thanks, Denise St. Pierre, 504-265-0581

Bricks: The last day to order bricks is **March 8th** for the **Butterfly Release in April**. Forms can be printed from our website www.tcfneworleans.com or I can send you a copy. Thank you!

TCF National Website Named Top Resource on the Internet for Grief and Loss

The Compassionate Friends national website has been named at the top of the list of best 2012 resources on the Internet for people experiencing grief and loss. GoodTherapy.org said in its announcement that "among the criteria we used to select our top 10 websites are quality and depth of content, presentation, and functionality." This is quite an honor for our website, as we were chosen from many excellent grief and loss websites including those from some much larger organizations. We have created a clip-it which can be cut and pasted into your chapter newsletter about the honor. You'll find the clip-it under the Newsletter Editors/Webmasters on the dropdown menu here in the leadership site.

*There are things that we don't want to happen but have to accept,
things we don't want to know but have to learn,
and people we can't live without but have to let go. ~ author unknown*

The Compassionate Friends is for Sharing

Many people may think that meetings of The Compassionate Friends consist of bereaved people who sit and cry most of the evening, but that is certainly a misconception. It is normal to shed tears as we talk about our child's death, and we would expect a newly bereaved person to cry. We understand that completely. But we don't just sit and cry. Would you believe that most of the time we spend in our sharing group circle we may enjoy hearing others' stories about their children, or even sharing our own? Our meetings are usually about our memories, our questions and also telling what has helped us to cope with it all. We all have ideas that we share with others in the hope that they may reach a point of "good memories" instead of bad memories of the child's death. A support group should be very comforting and welcoming to those who attend and should always have non-judgmental members. We are less concerned at how the child died (even though we do care) and we are more concerned that we be there for the parents, siblings or grandparents who need us. They have a desire to talk and share about their loved one. We want to let them lean on us in their time of pain, just as we had others before us who let us lean on them. It does come full circle.

Jackie Wesley ~ TCF, East Central Indiana & Miami-Whitewater Chapters

When Your Infant Has Died

The death of your infant has shattered your hopes and dreams for the future. It has sent shock waves through your body; this is one of the most difficult times in your life. It may seem as if the world has stopped and everything is moving in "Slow Motion."

Infants are not supposed to die and so it seems especially difficult to understand what has happened. If your baby was very young or not yet born, some people may discount your grief. They may assume that because you did not have time to develop a long-term relationship with your baby, your loss and your pain will be less. Sometimes a miscarriage or stillbirth is not even acknowledged by other family members and friends. These assumptions only increase the pain and feeling of isolation. You did however, have a long-term relationship with your child, if only in your mind.

You dreamed of watching your child grow up and you anticipated being a parent for a long time. It is important to understand that you won't get over the death of your baby; you will learn to live through it. There will always be moments of intense pain as you remember the birthday, the anniversary of the death and as you mark the passing of events you had planned to enjoy with your baby. Be prepared for these moments of grief and do not be alarmed as they continue throughout your life. Parents do not stop loving a child simply because the child has died. There are many things you can do to help yourself through grief. Acknowledge your loss and begin to accept the pain of grief. Try to live through it, not avoid it. Postponing the hurt simply intensifies it later. Take care of yourself; allow yourself to begin to heal. You will laugh again and enjoy life once more, but it will take some time. Do not be disturbed by your first laugh, it does not mean you have forgotten your baby, and it does not mean you are over your grief; be patient with yourself.

Create a ritual to help you remember your baby. Lighting a special candle on important days, establishing a memorial fund in your baby's name, or donating a toy, money, rocking chair or time to a special charity all may help you commemorate your child's life. Right now you may want to talk to someone who has traveled his or her grief journey a few miles ahead of you. It really helps to know you are not alone, or crazy or a failure. And if you have misplaced your Hope for a while, borrow it from a friend. Grief lasts far longer than anyone expects; be gentle and kind to yourself. Your baby has died, but you did not lose the love you shared; even though death has come, love never goes away.

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Like the Butterfly

It fluttered above my head
Weightless in the soft breeze.
I reached up my hand
It lit on my finger.
Waving glistening wings gently,
It looked at me for timeless moments.
I smiled, reaching deep and
Finding all those cherished memories.
As it flitted off through the sunlit morn,
I knew we had said hello once more.

Leslie Langford
TCF, North Platte, NE

March

A little bit of warm spring breaking its way out of the earth?
Today I see snowy flakes which remind me that still again one
season is passing into the next. Another layer of chilling rain,
ice and snow another layer of flowers fresh from bloom fallen
to the ground another layer of long, dry days with too much
sun another layer of autumn leaves fallen damp to the ground.
Seasons continue to run ahead while my heart and spirit are
slow to follow. March is on the calendar to remind me that it's
time for still more change.

Carol Thompson, TCF, Tyler, TX Always Remembering Sarah Cold Wintry
January 2, 2011

LOVE GIFT DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Scott A. Madere
March 1, 1963 ~ April 18, 2002



I can't begin to say how much we love and miss you.
My heart will never heal.
Happy Birthday, My Love
Love from Mom and Sisters, Dawn and Kelly

LOVE GIFT DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Kurt D. Fleming
March 12, 1980 ~ October 6, 1992



Always loved and deeply missed
Love, Mom and Dad
Derick, Chevis Jr., Sam, Jr., Chevis Jr., Sa'mya Fleming

LOVE GIFT DEDICATION IN LOVING MEMORY OF
Chris John Doyle III
March 3, 1980 ~ November 19, 2005



Happy 36th Birthday!

Chris, you are loved and missed every day.
Love, Mom, Dad, Megan and Family

Our Children Remembered

"To live in the hearts of those who love us is not to die."



March Birthdays

Scott Allen Madere	March 1	Son of Vivian Madere; Brother of Kelly DeNoux and Dawn Wilson
Stephanie Link	March 1	Daughter of Kalila Smith
Chris John Doyle III	March 3	Son of Jeanne Labat and Chris Doyle; Brother of Megan Doyle
DJ Ernst	March 7	Son of Penny B. Ernst
Christopher Lee Hanks	March 8	Son of Lizzie LaPoint
Jill Butterworth	March 9	Daughter of Pati True-Maddox
Courtney Nicole Drury	March 10	Daughter of David and Beth Drury
Kurt D. Fleming	March 12	Son of Susan and Samuel Fleming; Brother of Chevis, Derick and Sam, Jr.
Anthony "Tony" Pusateri	March 12	Son of Leslie and Eddie Dubroc
Scott Warner	March 15	Son of Sandy and Melissa Warner
Kasey Bernard	March 23	Daughter of Lynne Bernard
William John Smeltz	March 24	Son of Janice and Victor Smeltz; Brother of Nicholas
Gerry Provance	March 25	Son of Gerry and Linda Provance; Brother of Deena
Ava Rose Thomas	March 26	Daughter of Claudia and Perry Thomas
Christopher Brady	March 26	Son of Janice Brady
Brady Thomas Eldridge	March 27	Son of Merideth Eldridge
Kendall Michelle Daigle	March 28	Daughter of Dan and Michelle Daigle
Michelle "Shelly" Haensel	March 30	Daughter of Cookie and Bill Haensel; Sister of Nicole and Natalie
Brooke Anne Matlock	March 31	Daughter of Teresa Johnson; Sister of Amy; Granddaughter of Dixie Wherry
Julien Swafford	March 31	Grandson of Jim Romano

March Anniversaries

Courtney A. Jones	March 1	Grandson of Katie Cenance-Jones
Darlene N. Grote	March 1	Daughter of Joyce G. Miller
Veronica Carney	March 4	Granddaughter of Dolores DiPasquale
Jacqueline Carney	March 4	Granddaughter of Dolores DiPasquale
Brian Flaherty	March 4	Son of Laura Flaherty
Christopher Carmelo	March 5	Son of Naomie Carter Swanson
Beth Ann Hensen	March 8	Daughter of Jane Hensen
Wayne Gomez, Jr.	March 9	Son of Ava and Wayne Gomez; Brother of Jennifer and Denise
Michael Ray Reason, Jr.	March 9	Son of Omaira Reason
Mary Agnes Cuccia	March 11	Daughter of Margaret McMurray
Arthur "Jay" LaVie, V	March 11	Son of Gail LaVie; Brother of Michelle and Louis
Carrie Ellen Gore	March 15	Daughter of Don & Ann Gore
Chantelle Davenport	March 18	Daughter of Tyrone Davenport
Kendall Michelle Daigle	March 19	Daughter of Dan and Michelle Daigle
Christian "Chris" St. Pierre	March 21	Son of Duffy St. Pierre
Debra Barker Hamburger	March 27	Daughter of Antoinette Barker
Desha Ricks	March 27	Daughter of Aloma Powell
Gabriela Denise Brenes	March 28	Daughter of Ana Brenes
Gina Romano Swafford	March 31	Daughter of Jim Romano
Julien Swafford	March 31	Grandson of Jim Romano

A Newsletter Dedication is a special page dedication in memory of your child with any favorite poem or writing you submit.

A Love Gift is a short one or two sentence message in your child's memory. You may use the form below for love gifts.

Make checks payable to: **The Compassionate Friends**. Mail To: **Denise St. Pierre, 4541 Loveland St. Metairie, LA 70006 (265-0581)**

Your Name _____ **Phone** _____ **Your Child** _____

Birthday _____ **Death** _____ **Note:** _____

Love Gifts/Dedications to be put in the April newsletter are due March 22nd!!



Our listeners are willing to listen, understand and share.
504-454-3293 – Melva Duhon, son, 41, suicide
504-456-8248 – Patsy Ashton, son, 24, drug overdose
504-606-3275 – Janell Sisolak, son, 25, murdered
504-957-7419 – Lisa Ridge, son, 29, suicide
504-875-8836 – Sonya Mazzella, daughter, 4, drowned
985-665-6250 – Duffy St. Pierre, 2 sons, 22 and 25



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Metairie, LA 70006

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MARCH



*"Each of us finds an escape from the world after the death of our child...something to revise our history and help us survive. But eventually we must seek balance, find ways of coping with our soul-shattering loss and ground ourselves in our new reality. The Compassionate Friends has done all of that for me. But I had to take the first step."
—Annette Mennen Baldwin*